

underground. We won't take a ride, because we have to save that money for you to go home. But we don't have to get on the train platform. There are plenty of warm passages where people can walk. We just have to keep moving and nobody will bother us. Now we have to find a good, deep station. Around here they aren't cozy enough—too near the river. We'll go to the Châtelet station; that's what we'll do."

Slowly they made their way across the busy small island which is called "Ile de la Cité." They had to stop many times because Farivol was out of breath. They crossed another bridge, and there was the Châtelet subway station. Taking hold of the banister with one hand, and leaning heavily on Nicolas with the other, Farivol started to go down. All of a sudden he lost his balance, toppled over, and rolled downstairs. Nicolas shrieked, and, jumping the steps two at a time, he threw himself on the prostrate figure, calling wildly, "Mr. Farivol! Mr. Farivol!"

People stopped and started to gather around. A woman asked, "Is he your grandpa?" A man said, "Where do you live?" Another remarked, "The man looks ill. Maybe he broke something when he fell." Someone else said, "He should be taken to the hospital."

Nicolas heard nothing; he only sobbed loudly.

"What's the matter?" asked a commanding voice.

The people parted, and a policeman appeared. He bent over Farivol, saying, "Eh there, grandpa!" He straightened up. "I'll call an ambulance," he said. Then he looked around and saw Nicolas. "Who are you?" he asked.

"He was with the man," volunteered a woman. "I saw them coming down together. They must be related."

"Come with me, boy," ordered the policeman.

Come with me, boy! The sentence acted like an electric shock on Nicolas. He jumped and bolted through the crowd, and like an arrow he shot upstairs, dodging the incoming people.

"Eh there, boy!" called the policeman, running after him and blowing his whistle. Nicolas was already in the street. He threw himself in the midst of groups of people, and in the twinkling of an eye he had disappeared among the dense crowd. Hearing the whistle, several policemen ran toward their colleague, and they too began to look in all directions. But it was easy for Nicolas to hide; he was small and there were so many people. Nobody paid any attention to him. He kept right on busy Rivoli Street, walking close to the shop windows, where he would attract the least attention. For a long time he did not dare to stop, not even after he felt sure that no one was chasing him any more.

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At last he came to a large traffic crossing, near a stately-looking palace surrounded by a garden. The garden was enclosed by a railing supported by a low stone wall. Nicolas went and sat on the wall. His head whirled, and his heart beat fast. Mr. Farivol! Mr. Farivol in a hospital. Good Mr. Farivol, with whom he had been going to spend the day.

Now he was alone. In front of Nicolas, and to the right and to the left, traffic moved and stopped, moved and stopped. Red light, green light. On the sidewalk, people hurried past him. All around him, for miles and miles, the enormous city buzzed and bustled. There was no one to talk to. Everybody was intent on his own business. There was no time to pay attention to a forlorn boy sitting on a stone wall.

He tried to be brave: he was Little Chief, on a very important mission, all by himself, in the midst of a camp of Palefaces. . . . It didn't help. The Palefaces were around, all right, but, decidedly, there were too many of them, and their "camp" was too huge, and he was far, far from home.

Home! Maman, Papa, the twins. He longed to be with them, all together, right this minute, on the way to the old streetcar. How was he ever going to find his way back? He was lost, lost. He fumbled in his pocket to find a handkerchief to blow his nose, and, as he did so,

he felt something soft and silky. Toto's feather! He took it out carefully and began to brush his cheek with it, back and forth, back and forth. Toto. His friend. It seemed to Nicolas that he could hear the parrot's rasping voice clamoring, "'Colas! 'Colas!" How quickly Toto had learned!

When I go back this evening, Nicolas thought, maybe I can teach him to say my whole name! That's what he would do! He didn't feel frightened any more; he was even pleased with himself. So far he had not managed badly at all. He had got away. He had not been caught. He had met Mr. Farivol (at the thought of his friend, he swallowed hard). He had escaped the police. Good, good. Now time was going by. Now he had to stick it out only a few more hours, until sundown. Then it wouldn't matter whether he could find his way back by himself or had to be helped.

Just to stick it out for a few more hours! But he was so very cold! The hot chocolate had warmed him up, and so had his running away from the policeman. But now the freezing wind penetrated him through and through. Where could he go? If only Mr. Farivol were here, he would know what to do. What had he said— *It's warm underground*. Suddenly, right there in front of him Nicolas saw a subway station, which he had not noticed before. Hadn't Mr. Farivol explained that there were

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many underground passages where one could walk in safety and comfort, without being disturbed? What an idea! How simple!

Eagerly Nicolas slid down the wall, holding the gay little feather in his hand. He waited for the green light, crossed the street, and made his way down the steps of the Louvre subway station.



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IX

1 P. M. FEBRUARY 1

"It's just as I'm telling you, Monsieur le Commissaire. I was going down the passage in the Louvre subway station and I saw that boy sitting on the floor. I noticed him because, as you know, it's a small station—not a big one, like the Châtelet, where there are many corridors and where people transfer from one subway line to another. The boy was there and he held in his hand that parrot's feather. Well, I took the train and attended to my business; then I came back an hour later, and when I got out of the station, who should I see in the passage but that same boy sitting there and holding that feather? There was something strange about it. He was too young to be waiting that long all by himself. So I stopped in front of him to talk to him. But no sooner did he look at me than he jumped up and darted away in the direction of the outside stairs. Well, I caught him,

only his running away set me to thinking all the more. I said to him, 'Don't be afraid. Who are you waiting for?' He didn't answer. I said, 'Where do you live?' He didn't answer. 'Where are you going?' No answer—no, sir, not a word. So I said, 'Something's wrong. Anyhow, you should be in school.' And I brought him here."

"I'll make him talk!" said the chief officer of the police station confidently.

In front of the officer's desk Nicolas stood, still holding Toto's feather, his stubborn head bent down. His heart was heavy. Why did he have to be caught? Why hadn't he known that not all subway stations were the same?

"What's your name, my boy?" asked the chief officer. No answer.

"Look, this is the precinct police office. You have to answer my questions. What's your name?"

Nicolas stood motionless.

"Where do you live?"

Nicolas still kept his head down.

"Listen, aren't you ashamed to have run away that way? Because that's what you did. You're playing hooky!" said the chief officer sternly.

Nicolas shook his head energetically.

"No? Then what? Did you go shopping with your mother and get lost? We have to know where to take

you. Probably at this very moment tell me your name.

No answer.

The chief officer his arms helped he was pleased than he had been.

This did not "Make up your mind, you, for the time what we're going to do."

The foundling back. He raised imploringly. He which said a until five o'clock foundling home.

The chief spoke up. "I can foundling home you. Speak up."

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you. Probably your parents are worried sick about you at this very minute. We only mean to help you. Now, tell me your name and address."

No answer.

The chief officer looked at the policeman, who spread his arms helplessly but could not quite hide the fact that he was pleased that his superior was no more successful than he had been in making Nicolas talk.

This did not escape the chief officer, who snapped, "Make up your mind, boy, or else we're going to send you, for the time being, to the foundling home—that's what we're going to do."

The foundling home! Cold sweat ran down Nicolas's back. He raised his head and looked at the chief officer imploringly. Behind the chief officer he saw the clock, which said a quarter to twelve. He had to stay away until five o'clock. But he didn't want to be sent to the foundling home. Oh no, not that!

The chief officer, who was watching him closely, spoke up. "I can see that you don't relish the idea of the foundling home. Well, I can't spend all my time with you. Speak up now!"

"I can go home at five o'clock, sir," Nicolas hastened to say. "You don't have to send me to the foundling home. I can go home at five."

"Why not until five?" inquired the chief officer.

Nicolas was silent.

The policeman shook him. "Answer Monsieur le Commissaire! Why can't you go there now? Is it because your parents are away at work and you can't get in? Answer!"

"Leave him alone," said the chief officer. "I am handling this case, am I not? Listen, boy—you say you can go home at five o'clock, right?"

Nicolas nodded hopefully.

"Good. And where is it that you are going at five? What's the address of the place?"

Nicolas tightened his lips. That he could not tell. He had to remain "lost" until sundown. He repeated stubbornly, "I can go home at five." And he added, though he knew he was boasting, "I know the way. I'll go—at five."

"Sorry, boy. You give us no name, no address, no explanation for your loitering. We can't keep you here until we find out where you belong. For the time being, you'll have to go to the foundling home." And the chief officer made a motion with his head for the policeman to take Nicolas away.

"Oh no, no! Please, sir, not the foundling home!" cried Nicolas, breaking down.

Just at that moment the telephone rang. The police-

man answered, saying, "Ce

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man answered and gave the receiver to the chief officer, saying, "Central, Monsieur le Commissaire."

The chief officer took the receiver, listened, and motioned to the policeman to wait. Then he began jotting down some words on a pad. Suddenly he exclaimed, "How old did you say? . . . About ten or eleven. . . . Yes. . . . Listen, we have a boy here about that age; one of my men picked him up at the Louvre station. . . . No, I don't know his name. He won't talk. . . . Anything special? . . . No. He's dressed like any boy: black cape, beret, muffler. Wait, wait! He has a feather in his hand. . . . Yes, a parrot's feather. . . . You don't say! . . . Well, I declare. . . . What did you say the parrot's name is? . . . Toto!"

Nicolas blushed to the roots of his hair. He looked at the feather in his hand, opened his fingers, let it fall, and stepped on it. Toto's feather had betrayed him.

The chief officer, who was watching him, went on talking on the phone. "He's the one. . . . Sure! I can see he knows Toto. He's the missing boy, all right. What's the address? . . . Yes, at once. . . . What did you say? . . . An eviction! Oh, my! . . . Yes, yes. Before sunset, of course. . . . Don't worry; one of my men will be right over with the boy."

He put down the receiver. Nicolas stood looking at

the tips of his shoes. It was all over. His plan had failed miserably. He wanted the floor to swallow him. He wanted the world to come to an end right then and there. It was so, so unfair!

"Well," said the chief officer, "let this be a lesson to you, my boy—you can't fool the police." He stopped talking as another policeman came in, leaned over the desk, and whispered something. The chief officer turned toward Nicolas. "More about you, it seems. Tell me the truth—do you know a man by the name of Farivol?"

"Mr. Farivol!" Nicolas cried, brightening.

"Ah, I see you do!" commented the chief officer. "And what were you doing this morning with that shady character, that good-for-nothing, that tramp?"

"That's not true! That's not true!" shouted Nicolas, raising his head. "Mr. Farivol was nice, nice, nice!"

"Oh, yes?" mocked the chief officer. "Probably took all your money and drank it!"

"He did not! He did not!" yelled Nicolas, stamping his foot. "He did not! I didn't have any money. He shared his bread with me; he treated me to a cup of chocolate; and he paid for it with his own money. He did!"

The chief officer shrugged his shoulders and said in a conciliatory tone, "All right, all right. We won't go into

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the life of the poor devil—it's bad enough luck that he broke his leg. But I want to say this: it's high time that you be taken in hand by your own father, and whatever is coming to you when you get home you richly deserve. Did you know that you've been holding back your family's moving?"

Holding back the family's moving! Nicolas could not help smiling. So his plan had worked—so far. Ah, if only Mr. Farivol—

"And that makes you smile! Impudent youngster!" roared the chief officer, turning to the waiting policeman. "Take him away at once and get him home. Smiling! Indeed! Ah, if I were your father I can assure you that I would see to it that you would never as much as entertain the thought of running away again!"

And with that the chief officer made such a significant gesture that, for a moment, Nicolas feared he'd forgotten he was not Nicolas's father and was going to grab him and give him a beating.

"Come on!" said the policeman, and Nicolas hurried to follow him.

The ride on the subway would have been a treat any other time. But now Nicolas kept wishing for an accident or for the policeman to transfer to the wrong train. But nothing happened. When they emerged from the



subway station, there they were, in the same square where Nicolas had stood alone in the gray dawn of that morning. Only now the clock said a quarter to one.

Burning with shame at being led by a policeman, Nicolas tried to look casual. As they approached Number 6 bis, the boy saw that there was quite a crowd in front of the house; it was the two-hour lunch period and all the neighbors were there, talking and watching. There was a pushcart on the curb, filled with the family belongings.

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and Madame Champollion, making her way through the crowd and waving her arms, hurried into the house. In the doorway were two policemen, who greeted the one who was with Nicolas. They briefly exchanged a few words: "Dirty job . . . landlord won't have babies . . . boy ran away . . . so cold . . . no place to go . . . shouldn't be allowed. . . ."

Nicolas did not have to go up; Maman was coming down already. Madame Champollion was at the foot of the stairs, calling, "Here he is, here he is!" She tried to take him by the hand, but he backed away. He felt defeated and angry. Maman gave him a quick hug and said, "Oh Nicolas, how could you? How could you?" He did not respond to her affection. Somewhere, somehow, he had been tricked, tricked by the grown-ups. He could not explain how, but he felt it, and he hid within himself. Now Papa was coming down too, holding the laundry basket with the twins in it. Papa's face was very set. Nicolas wished he could melt away and disappear in the wall. Fearfully he watched as Papa set the basket down at the foot of the stairs. It seemed to Nicolas that Papa had never been so tall and he, Nicolas, so small and helpless. How could he ever, ever explain—even to Papa? And yet, it had almost, almost worked. The chief officer had said so. If only, only—

He heard Madame Champollion saying to Maman,

"Take the basket with you and come and have a cup of coffee with me at the café next door, won't you, while your husband settles with Mr. Monfort? And please, sir"—she turned to Papa—"won't you join us later?"

"Thanks, I will," said Papa. "But it may take a little time. Mr. Monfort is not the only one with whom I have to settle. I have to attend to this boy too." And taking firm hold of Nicolas's arm, he said sternly, "Come with me," and pushed him ahead through the door of the superintendent's quarters.

And lo and behold, there sat Mr. Monfort, looking like a thundercloud. Nicolas tried to back out, but Papa would not let go of him. What, what was going to happen? Was Papa about to ask him to apologize to Mr. Monfort? Nicolas stiffened. That he would not do. Never. He had rather—

"At last!" bellowed Mr. Monfort, without waiting for Papa to open his mouth. "At last! If I hadn't had the police alerted all over Paris we would still be waiting. Don't you believe for one minute that I didn't see right straight through your little game! You engineered to send the boy away in order to remain here twenty-four hours more. It's as plain as day that's what you did. But I am smarter than you are—a lot smarter, see! It's still a long way before sundown. So now, give me the key, and get out!"

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"It wasn't papa's fault!" burst out Nicolas. "Honest, sir, it was—."

"Quiet, Nicolas," ordered Papa. Then he took the big key to the apartment out of his pocket and, showing it to Mr. Monfort, he said, "Sir, as soon as you give me back my five thousand francs the key is yours."

"Bonjour, 'Colas!" said a voice.

Nicolas jumped. Toto! Papa must have heard too, because he let go of Nicolas, who hurried toward the cage. Toto was outside, doing his daily dozen, up and down, down and up.

"Bonjour, Toto!" said Nicolas.

"Bonjour, 'Colas!" repeated Toto, shaking himself happily. As he did so, a small feather fell down on the floor. Nicolas picked it up. Now that it was all over, he was no longer resentful. He was just glad to see Toto. If only Toto could come with them. Well, in the old streetcar, the little emerald, scarlet, and yellow feather would remind him of his friend Toto.

He heard Mr. Monfort shouting, "The nerve, the nerve! Give you back your five thousand francs? I don't owe you anything! You got into my house under false pretences; you kept me waiting here half a day; and now you want your money back!"

"Sir," said Papa firmly, "I am entitled to my money. It was for the apartment, and you are putting us out."

"It was not for the rent!" barked Mr. Monfort. "It was for stepping into the place—the threshold fee, that's what it was. Well, you got in, didn't you? And now you want your money back. How dare you! You nasty double-crosser with that sly brat of yours over there!" And suddenly Mr. Monfort was up, striding toward Nicolas and yelling, red in the face, "Just watch me teach him a lesson!"

In a flash Nicolas retreated behind Toto's cage.

"Don't you dare touch my boy!" shouted Papa, lurching forward to reach Mr. Monfort. He missed, bumped into the table, slid, and fell, while Mr. Monfort grappled with Nicolas, who promptly dropped limply onto the floor.

"Old galoot! Old galoot! Old galoot!" screeched a piercing voice, and Toto, fiery-eyed, flapping his wings, and with all his feathers up, pounced on Mr. Monfort.

Mr. Monfort ducked, let go of Nicolas, slipped, righted himself, grabbed a chair, hurled it at Toto, lost his balance, and came down with a thud. The chair crashed on the floor. Shrieking wildly, Toto, who had avoided being hit, took refuge on Nicolas's shoulder. The parrot shouted one more "Old galoot!" and settled down.

For a few seconds there was a dead silence. Then a roar of laughter filled the room as the neighbors, at-

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tracted by the noise, spilled into Madame Champollion's apartment and discovered Mr. Monfort, Papa, and Nicolas lying on the floor, and Toto, with a gleaming eye, victoriously surveying the battlefield. Instantaneously there were cheers, the clapping of hands, and cries of, "Bravo, Toto!"

Papa picked himself up. He still held the big key of the apartment. He looked around and started to laugh too. Then Nicolas stood up—carefully, because of Toto on his shoulder. But Nicolas could not keep quiet; his sides were fairly splitting from laughing.

"Kooroo!" went Toto, joining the fun. Whereupon everybody laughed twice as much—everybody except Mr. Monfort. Helped by the policemen, he got to his feet slowly. He did not laugh. He looked stunned.

Papa stopped laughing and inquired, "Sir, are you—"

He was cut short by Madame Champollion's voice clamoring in the hall. "Let me pass! Let me pass!" In she came, followed by Maman, carrying the laundry basket.

"Listen, listen, all of you!" Madame Champollion cried excitedly. "We have just heard. Over the radio. In the café. A special broadcast—"

"From Abbé Pierre," put in Maman breathlessly.

"Oh," said a man, "the ragpicker-priest who is trying to have emergency cities built for the homeless, eh?"

"Right! Right!" approved Madame Champollion.

"Well, he was on the air. Just now. Special. Unscheduled." She paused, wrung her hands, and wailed, "Oh, it's dreadful, dreadful!"

"What, what?" the people cried.

"He said," went on Madame Champollion, opening her arms, "that we've all got to help. Volunteers are to meet tonight at eleven o'clock, at the Panthéon."

The Panthéon! I was there! thought Nicolas.

But already someone was asking, "To meet him at the Panthéon? What for?"

"To help him to pick up the homeless people. Because of the weather." Madame Champollion looked around; then she announced slowly, "A woman was frozen to death on the Boulevard Sébastopol last night, clutching an eviction paper in her hand. That's what Abbé Pierre said. Those were his very words."

The crowd groaned.

"Frozen to death!" repeated a man.

"And clutching an eviction paper in her hand!" said a woman pointedly.

Silence fell, a dense, heavy, ominous silence. And gradually everybody began to stare in one and the same direction. They stood there, perfectly still, their eyes riveted upon Mr. Monfort. Mr. Monfort tried to avoid their stares, and in an attempt to look unconcerned he began dusting himself off meticulously. The silence

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grew more and more uncomfortable. At last Mr. Monfort straightened his shoulders and raised his head deliberately in an effort to recover his lost dignity. But then his eyes fell at once on Toto, who was watching him sharply from Nicolas's shoulder. Nervously Mr. Monfort began to shift from one foot to another. Then he opened and closed his mouth.

Finally, throwing a sheepish glance around, he cleared his throat, made a sign with his head toward Papa, and mumbled, "Maybe we could talk things over again."





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EPILOGUE

They had a wonderful meal, all the neighbors chipping in with cold meat, salad, cheese, and wine. Madame Champollion joined the family for coffee and cake. She brought the cake from the pastry shop. She had chosen the kind called a "Saint-Honoré," which was piled high with whipped cream. Nicolas drank chocolate—for the second time that day. But this cup tasted so much better, because Maman had made it, and he was having it right here at home, at Number 6 bis.

"It's getting late," said Madame Champollion, rising from the table. She was followed by Papa, Maman, and Nicolas. "Toto will be lonesome downstairs, though when I left, he was fast asleep—exhausted, that's how he was. Too many emotions!" She giggled and added genially, pointing to Nicolas, "Just like Toto! Practically asleep on his feet. He must be so tired, the poor rabbit!"

I must go and let you folks all go to bed—like the twins.”

“Oh, Suzanne and Mandine sleep all the time!” Maman laughed and threw a glance at the basket.

“Well,” commented Madame Champollion knowingly, “they aren’t going to keep it up much longer. They’re growing fast. But it doesn’t matter, now that Mr. Monfort said you can stay here as long as you wish. Am I glad! If you people had gone I think I would never have been able to sleep another wink for the rest of my life—ever!”

“We’ll never forget that you, Madame Champollion, are the one who took us in first,” said Papa. “Even without your knowing about the twins, you did us a big favor—what with the housing shortage, and your taking no fee. If it hadn’t been for you we would still be in the tent—that is, if we—”

“Toto did it,” interrupted Madame Champollion quickly. “Toto did it. (Oh, I *must* go!)” She started shaking hands all around. “Believe me,” she went on, “Toto and Nicolas did the whole thing. Toto got you in and sided with Nicolas from the first. Nicolas— Well, if it hadn’t been for him, you would have gone, without any fuss, and long before that one-o’clock radio broadcast. Correct?”

“Correct!” said Maman, smiling tenderly at Nicolas.

“But oh morning of the job soon. I found him gone. Nicolas his plan. “Ah, tell us! Of course he’s got something to submit that for of it myself can see it. whole family sheltered. As he should. Chief, Little “Nicolas conviction him—that upstairs!” worried. (And I was the police sorts; he was

"But oh, that Nicolas, how worried he had us! This morning I had faintly heard him go out. Then the door of the john opened and closed, and I expected him back soon. I fell asleep, and later, when I got up and found him gone, I thought I'd go crazy!"

Nicolas could not help thinking once more how well his plan had worked.

"Ah, the rascal!" said Papa warmly. "He really fooled us! Of course I kept telling my wife: the boy is all right; he's got something up his sleeve, that's all. But I must admit that for the time being I couldn't make head or tail of it myself and I was pretty angry at him. But now I can see it all. You are right, Madame Champollion: this whole family owes it to Toto and Nicolas that they are sheltered and safe."

As he said this, Papa put his arm around Nicolas's shoulder. Nicolas looked up, and their eyes met—Big Chief, Little Chief.

"Nicolas is smart!" said Madame Champollion with conviction. "I knew it the very first day I laid eyes on him—that evening when he carried the laundry basket upstairs!" She chuckled. "Now, about your being worried. (Oh, I *must* go!) Naturally you were worried. And I was peeved. And Mr. Monfort was furious. And the police were at their wits' end. Even Toto was out of sorts; he wouldn't talk and wouldn't eat. But for all the

trouble that boy of yours gave us, don't you think he paid plenty himself, the poor rabbit—all alone in this big city of Paris, and in that terrible weather! If it hadn't been for that tramp—What's his name?"

"Mr. Farivol," said Nicolas.

"Yes, Mr. Farivol," repeated Madame Champollion slowly. "You know what? That makes me think of all the people, tramps or no tramps, who are still out now in this freezing weather."

"Just as we too might have been." Maman shuddered.

"Mr. Farivol is warm today, at the hospital?" Nicolas asked.

"Indeed!" said Papa. "For him, breaking a leg was lucky. Isn't it sad to think of such a thing? I know what I'm going to do! I'll answer that radio call for volunteers to meet at the Panthéon tonight at eleven o'clock, and pick up people in doorways, under bridges, in open sheds, on subway gratings. That's the least *I* can do, now that we have a roof."

Smiling happily, Maman slipped her arm under Papa's.

"Papa!" burst out Nicolas, all at once wide awake.

"The grating near the Panthéon, that's the one where I sat. Mr. Farivol said it was his own grating."

"A grating!" wailed Madame Champollion. "A grating! Imagine!"

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"That's just the trouble," said Papa, "nobody does. I mean, nobody can imagine what it's like to have no roof over one's head—in such weather, especially. That's what it takes to think of the other fellow—imagination!" Papa squeezed Nicolas's hand, and Nicolas squeezed back.

"Right!" Madame Champollion sighed. "I tell you, you never know about people."

"Or boys," said Papa, playfully pulling Nicolas's ear.

"Or parrots!" cried Nicolas.

"'Parrots' is right," agreed Madame Champollion heartily. "Oh, I *must* go!" She opened the door, turned around, raised a finger, winked at Nicolas, and announced, "Believe me, sometimes a word from a parrot is the beginning of wisdom!"

"*A la soupe, Eugénie, à la soupe!*" clamored the raucous voice of Toto, suddenly filling the stairway.

Everybody burst out laughing. "What did I tell you? Hear? My precious little heart!" Madame Champollion grinned and threw up her hands. Then she hastened majestically downstairs, waving and singing out, "Good night! Good night!"

"Good night! Good night!" they echoed, all together. Then Nicolas stepped forward, leaned over the banister, and called gaily, "Good night, Toto!"

Claire Huchet Bishop

was born in France, but now is an American citizen living in New York City. She keeps in constant touch with her native land through frequent trips. As one of themselves among the French, she has opportunities to know some aspects of their life which would not be seen by the casual tourist. When she returned from a recent visit, during which the tragedy of the housing shortage had been brought sharply to her attention, she wrote *Toto's Triumph*. Here is authentic French background, but the story itself does not belong to any particular country; it is the story of a ten-year-old boy's initiative and courage.

A well-known story teller and speaker, Mrs. Bishop also had written poetry which was her first published work. Later she began to create stories for children of all ages. Some of her books have been translated into several languages; others have received awards, and still others have been selected for grade readers and anthologies.

Mrs. Bishop also writes for adults, and her articles and reviews have been published here and abroad in many magazines, including *The Commonwealth* and *The Saturday Review*.